



Missouri Department of Natural Resources Data Processing Policy

Topic: E-mail Acceptable Use

Item: 1

Status: Version 1.1

Updated: August 3, 2000

See also: 610.010 to 610.028 RSMo,
Administrative Policy 2070,
Administrative Policy 1020,
Data Processing Policy 2

This Data Processing Policy
reviewed and approved

by: Original signed by Jeff Staake
Jeff Staake, Dept. Deputy Director
Missouri Dept. of Natural Resources

on: Aug. 16, 2001
Date

Introduction:

It is the public policy of this state and the department that records be open to the public unless otherwise provided by law. For additional information on this policy, refer to the *Open Meetings Records Law, Sections 610.010 to 610.028, RSMo (Missouri Revised Statutes)*, and *Administrative Policy 2070 - "Requests for Information (Sunshine Law)"*.

Electronic Mail (e-mail) is a method of sharing or transmitting information that could either be handled electronically or through a hard copy format. It is to be used for official business purposes only.

General Provisions:

- A. E-mail may be used as a substitute for a paper copy of any document that normally would require a signature. E-mail is considered an official form of communication and the sender is responsible for the content. The e-mail document can be used the same as a letter or memorandum. Information, language and/or other content not appropriate for a letter or memorandum must not be included in e-mail.
- B. Individual employees are responsible for the content of e-mail documents sent from their e-mail account - in the same manner employees are responsible for letters or memorandums with their signature.
- C. DNR provides an internal e-mail system for staff use. Use of other e-mail and similar services to conduct department business is prohibited. This prohibition includes "Web-based" e-mail services, and other Internet services which offer interaction that could be handled via the standard departmental e-mail system.
- D. Use of any e-mail or related service for personal correspondence / business is prohibited. This is a simple extension of the expectation that department time and resources are meant for department business only.
- E. E-mail information is owned by the State of Missouri, Department of Natural Resources. E-mail messages are to be considered the same as a paper document. Authorized management may access an individual's paper files, as well as access an individual's e-mail, without prior notification to the individual.

- F. Each employee must have a secure e-mail system password. Employees are encouraged to change passwords on a regular basis. Passwords are considered confidential and should not be divulged to anyone else. Passwords are designed strictly to protect departmental resources. The use of passwords is not intended to create an expectation of privacy for any individual.
- G. When a password must be reset or changed by MIS, it will be done only when a request has been sent to the MIS Help Desk mailbox or upon receipt of a written request. Only requests submitted by Information Resource Managers (IRMs) and Data Processing Coordinators can be honored. It is not the responsibility of MIS to approve or certify such requests.
- H. Sending an e-mail is no indication that the recipient will receive, open and/or read the message. Sending an e-mail does not guarantee that time-critical information will be read by the recipient in the time frame that the sender desires. Where time-critical action is necessary a direct conversation or telephone call may also be appropriate.
- I. Discretion must be exercised when using e-mail for personnel, confidential, and other sensitive matters.
- J. E-mail requests for DNR information that fall under the Sunshine Law should be handled in the same manner as a paper or telephone request. See *Administrative Policy 2070 - "Requests for Information (Sunshine Law)"* for details.
- K. E-mail messages may be archived indefinitely in order to fulfill appropriate requests for electronic files under the Sunshine Law, etc.
- L. MIS is responsible for maintaining the department-wide address list of e-mail users, based upon the names of users provided to them by IRMs. Each e-mail group is maintained by the most appropriate individual(s) that have knowledge of who should be included in a given group.
- M. E-mail messages sent outside of the Department of Natural Resources must follow the same practices listed herein.
- N. E-mail is subject to the same restrictions referred to in *Administrative Policy No. 1020 - "Correspondence to the Governor's Office, State Elected Officials and Legislature"*.
- O. The use of Internet e-mail is also governed by *Data Processing Policy 2, Internet Acceptable Use*.